

Name:

Date:

Class/Period:

Voices: Women in the Texas Revolution: The Runaway Scrape and the Aftermath

Instructions: Read the background information and analyze the primary source excerpts by answering the document analysis questions below.

Accounts of the Events of the Runaway Scrape

Background Information:

When news of the fall of the Alamo spread, so did panic associated with it. Santa Anna's intention with the slaughter at the Alamo was to instill fear into everyone who might resist him and that worked well. Houston's army was also retreating, which added to the panic. If the army was moving eastward, what was going to protect them against the onslaught of Santa Anna? Nothing, apparently. People began abandoning their farms and homes and fleeing east to escape the Mexican army.

As it happened, it was a tremendously rainy spring in 1836. The rains had come and come and turned the roads, such as they were, into muddy bogs. Many of the men, moreover, had left to join Houston's army. So, the roads were littered with women driving oxen and tending children, trying to wade through impossible mud.

*Background information provided by Dr. Andrew J. Torget,
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Accounts of the Aftermath of the Runaway Scrape

Document A

"Innkeeper Angelina Peyton returned to San Felipe after the Runaway Scrape to find her 'place barren of everything - ruins all my things burnt up - crockery piles of cinders - ashes and incombustibles in heaps as left by the fire.' She could stand to stay but a short time . . . before moving on to Columbia to open another tavern"

Jenkins, John Holmes. *The Papers of the Texas Revolution, 1835-1836*, pp. 235. The Texas Revolutionary Experience. Austin, Texas: Presidial Press, 1973.

Document B

“Few had suffered more than Fanny Menefee, the wife of George Sutherland. She had lost a son at the Alamo and then spent two months ‘wandering about’ the countryside looking for a place of safety. With three little girls in tow, she fled from their home west of the Colorado River to the Sabine [runaway scrape, I assume], a journey of about two hundred miles made with little help from her soldier-husband. In mid-May the family became one of the first to return to the frontier region. There she ‘found nothing in the world worth speaking of.’ Houses and warehouses had all been burned in a destruction so complete as to leave ‘no one mouthful of anything to eat. God knows how we will make out,’ she acknowledged to her sister. ‘We are trying to raise something to eat but I fear we will miss it.’ Nevertheless, she concluded, ‘if we can have peace and can have preaching I wont care for the loss of what property is gone.’”

Paul Lack, *The Texas Revolutionary Experience: A Political and Social History, 1835-1836* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1992), pp. 236-237.

Document C

Thomas Jefferson Rusk later observed:

“The men of Texas deserved much credit, but more was due the women. Armed men facing a foe could not but be brave; but the women, with their little children around them, without means of defense or power to resist, faced danger and death with unflinching courage.”

Texas State Historical Association. “The Southwestern Historical Quarterly, Volume 90, July 1986-April 1987, periodical 1986/1987.” *The Portal to Texas History*. University of North Texas Libraries, September 14, 2010. <https://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting Texas State Historical Association. Accessed July 11, 2021. <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph117152/>:

Analysis Questions:

1. The account in Document A gives an account of Angelina Peyton's return to her tavern in the aftermath of the Runaway Scrape. The closing remarks state "She could stand to stay but a short time . . . before moving on to Columbia to open another tavern." In your opinion, do you think other colonists did the same thing? Why or why not?

2. Based on the accounts from Documents B and C, use three adjectives to describe the type of women that endured the events of the Texas Revolution.

The Aftermath of the Runaway Scrape: The Reminiscences of Mrs. Dilue (Rose) Harris

Document A April 1836 - On the way back Home

"San Felipe had been burned, and dear old Harrisburg was in ashes. There was nothing left of the Stafford plantation but a crib with a thousand bushels of corn."

"Burning the saw mill at Harrisburg and the buildings on Stafford's plantation was a calamity that greatly affected the people. On the plantation there was a sugar-mill, cotton-gin, blacksmith-shop, grist-mill, a dwelling-house, negro houses, and a stock of farming implements."

Document B Sunday morning, May 1, 1836 - Home

“Uncle James told mother that the floor had been torn up by the Mexicans in searching for eggs.”... “As soon as it was light enough for us to see we went to the house, and the first thing we saw was the hogs running out. Father’s bookcase lay on the ground broken open, his books, medicines, and other things scattered on the ground, and the hogs sleeping on them.”

“The first thing that father did after breakfast was to go to the cornfield. He had planted corn the first of March, and it needed plowing. He did not wait for Monday, or to put the house in order, but began plowing at once. His field was in the bottom, and he had hidden his plow.”

“Mother was very despondent, but father was hopeful. He said Texas would gain her independence and become a great nation.”

The Reminiscences of Mrs. Dilue Harris, II, 162, The Quarterly of the Texas State Historical Association, JANUARY, 1901, Vol. 4, No. 3 (JANUARY, 1901), pp. 155-189

Analysis Questions:

1. In Document A Dilue and her family are headed back home. She writes that almost everything was burned down. How would losing things like the sugar-mill, cotton-gin and blacksmith-shop affect a community?
2. How do you think Dilue felt when she saw that her house was destroyed?
3. In Document B Dilue said “The first thing that father did after breakfast was to go to the corn field.” and “began plowing at once.” Why do you think he did that first? Explain your reasoning.